

**Prisons &
Probation**

Ombudsman
Independent Investigations

Independent investigation into the death of Mr John Price, a prisoner at HMP Oakwood, on 6 February 2020

A report by the Prisons and Probation Ombudsman

Our Vision

To carry out independent investigations to make custody and community supervision safer and fairer.

Our Values

We are:

Impartial: *we do not take sides*

Respectful: *we are considerate and courteous*

Inclusive: *we value diversity*

Dedicated: *we are determined and focused*

Fair: *we are honest and act with integrity*



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Summary

1. The Prisons and Probation Ombudsman aims to make a significant contribution to safer, fairer custody and community supervision. One of the most important ways in which we work towards that aim is by carrying out independent investigations into deaths, due to any cause, of prisoners, young people in detention, residents of approved premises and detainees in immigration centres.
2. We carry out investigations to understand what happened and identify how the organisations whose actions we oversee can improve their work in the future.
3. Mr John Price died of lung cancer, which had spread to other parts of his body, on 6 February 2020 at HMP Oakwood. He was 63 years old. We offer our condolences to his family and friends.
4. The clinical reviewer concluded that Oakwood provided Mr Price with a good standard of palliative care, for which they should be commended, and overall, the clinical care that he received at Oakwood was equivalent to that which he could have expected to receive in the community. She made a recommendation which is not directly related to Mr Price's death but which the Head of Healthcare will need to address.
5. We did not identify any non-clinical issues of concern and we make no recommendations.

Investigation process

6. NHS England commissioned an independent clinical reviewer to review Mr Price's clinical care at HMP Oakwood. The clinical review is attached to this report at Annex 1.
7. The PPO investigator has investigated the non-clinical issues in Mr Price's care, including his location, the security arrangements for his hospital escorts, liaison with his family and whether compassionate release was considered.
8. The PPO family liaison officer wrote to Mr Price's next of kin to explain the investigation. They did not respond.
9. We shared the initial report with the Prison Service. There were no reported factual inaccuracies.
10. This version of our report, published on the website, has been amended to remove the names of staff and prisoners involved in my investigation.

Previous deaths at Oakwood

11. There were eleven deaths from natural causes and one drugs death at HMP Oakwood in the two years before Mr Price's death. There are no significant similarities to the findings in our investigation of these deaths.

Key Events

12. On 22 June 2012, Mr John Price was convicted of sex offences and on 8 July 2013, he was sentenced to sixteen years in prison. On 4 July 2017, he was transferred to HMP Oakwood.
13. On 27 November 2019, Mr Price told a nurse that he had had a cough for three weeks and had blood in his sputum. A prison GP thought that he may have tuberculosis and referred him for an urgent chest x-ray. On 29 November, Mr Price went to hospital for the chest x-ray, following which he was diagnosed with pneumonia. Hospital staff arranged for him to see a respiratory consultant.
14. On 27 December 2019, a respiratory consultant told Mr Price that he had lung cancer which had spread to other parts of his body. He returned to Oakwood for palliative care.
15. On 6 February 2020, Mr Price died of lung cancer.

Caroline Mills
Assistant Ombudsman

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